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The Soviet Union's successful development of hunter-killer satellites is causing deepening frowns of concern in Washington because of the clear and present threat to our spies in space.



Stansfield Turner

The problem was first raised by President Carter last spring. In October, Defense Secretary Harold Brown voiced the Pentagon's misgivings.

Now CIA Director Stansfield Turner has acknowledged that the USSR's anti-satellite weapon is causing his agency real worry.

And little wonder. We rely heavily on spy-in-the-sky satellites for all sorts of information about Russian arms buildups, military experiments and deployment of conventional forces, as well as strategic weapons.

They provide the only reliable means of checking to see that the Soviets are not cheating on arms-limitation and other accords.

Our government is right to be alarmed. But fretting and stewing won't do much good. We need a high-priority effort to develop countermeasures which will protect those vital satellites.

Research is being done, but at so leisurely a pace that it will take the U. S. five or six years to match what the Russians are able to do now. We don't believe the President should be satisfied with that timetable in a matter of such urgency.